

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 2, with the following rewritten paragraph:

A base is added to a mixture comprising a protected 2-furaldehyde (2) ~~whereby Z is the formyl functionality of the 2-furaldehyde which is protected with a suitable protective group~~ and a boric acid ester (3) ~~whereby R is a suitable residue such as a linear or branched alkyl group or an aryl group which is optionally substituted with an alkyl group.~~ In the protected 2-furaldehyde (2), Z is the formyl functionality which is protected with a suitable protective group. In boric acid ester (3), R is a suitable residue such as a linear or branched alkyl group or an aryl group which is optionally substituted with an alkyl group.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 11, with the following rewritten paragraph:

The protective group ~~with which~~ for protecting the formyl functionality of the 2-furaldehyde ~~is protected~~ may be any protective group that is known to a person skilled in the art to be suitable. In a preferred embodiment the protective group is an O,O-acetal protective group or an N,O-acetal protective group. In case that the acetal protective group is an O,O-acetal protective group preferably the alcohol is selected from the group consisting of alkanols having 1 to 10 carbon atoms, alkandiols having 1 to 20 carbon atoms, and mixtures thereof. In a preferred embodiment the protective group is selected from methanol, ethanol, propanol, butanol, ethylene glycol, 1,3-propane diol, and N-substituted ethanol amines.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 9, with the following rewritten paragraph:

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Reply to the Office Action dated: May 2, 2005

European patent application 02 021 439.1 filed September 25, 2002, is incorporated herein by reference.